

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSM-03 PPT-01 SCA-01 OC-06 CCO-00 /022 W  
----- 121433

O R 081538Z OCT 76  
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
SINAI SUPPORT MISSION 8  
SECSTATE WASHDC 9971

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA, CVIS, SY

SUBJECT: SYRIAN VISA REQUIREMENTS

REF: (A) DAMASCUS 6826 (NOTAL), (B) TEL AVIV 6805 (NOTAL)

1. LEST DAMASCUS 6826 CREATE MISLEADLING IMPORESSION,  
WE WISH TO ADVISE ADDRESSEES THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE  
IN SYRIAN POLICY REGARDING ISSUANCE OF VISAS TO OFFICIAL  
AMERICANS ASSIGNED TO JERUSALEM OR TEL AVIV. NEITHER  
SYRIAN EMBASSY IN AMMAN NOR SYRIAN BORDER POST DERA  
WILL ISSUE VISAS TO OFFICIAL AMERICANS ASSIGNED TO JERU-  
SALEM OR TEL AVIV. OCCASIONAL EXCEPTIONS HAVE RESULTED  
FROM LAXITY OF INDIVIDUAL OFFICIALS RATHER THAN SARG POLICY.

2. WE UNDERSTAND THAT AT TIMES SYRIAN EMBASSY AMMAN  
(GENERALLY) AND SYRIAN-JORDANIAN BORDER POST (OCCASIONALLY)  
REFUSE VISAS TO ANY AMERICANS ENTERING JORDAN VIA ALLENBY  
BRIDGE. THIS IS A RISK WHICH TRAVELERS RUN.

3. ENTRY FORMALITIES AT DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
ARE EASIER. SO LONG AS IT DOES NOT APPEAR FROM PASSPORT  
THAT TRAVELER HAS COME FROM OR IS ASSIGNED TO ISRAEL OR  
JERUSALEM, WE BELIEVE VISA WOULD BE ISSUED MORE OR LESS  
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AUTOMATICALLY. HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN NO RECENT CASE

TO PROVE THE POINT.

4. TO BEST OUR KNOWLEDGE, NO MEMBERS OF SINAI FIELD MISSION HAVE AS YET VISITED SYRIA, BUT WE BELIEVE THAT IF SYRIANS KNEW TRAVELERS WERE FROM SINAI FIELD MISSION, THEY WOULD BE TREATED IN SAME MANNER AS OFFICIAL AMERICANS ASSIGNED TO TEL AVIV OR JERUSALEM, I.E., VISAS WOULD BE DENIED. RAISING MATTER OFFICIALLY WITH SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY WOULD, WE FEAR, ONLY GUARANTEE DENIAL OF ENTRY AS UNFORTUNATELY HAPPENED WITH CONSUL GENERAL NEWLIN SOME MONTHS AGO.

5. SHOULD LONG AND HORSTICK SUCCEED IN OBTAINING ENTRY VISAS AT SYRIAN BORDER, WE REQUEST THEY CONTACT US DURING THEIR VISIT TO DAMASCUS. SHOULD VISAS BE DENIED, WE REQUEST THEY REPORT THEIR EXPERIENCE TO EMBASSY AMMAN.

6. REGRET WE UNABLE TO GIVE MORE DEFINITIVE STATEMENT OF SYRIAN POLICY. OUR EXPERIENCE TODATE, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN THAT WHENEVER WE HAVE RAISED THESE MATTERS WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY, INDIVIDUAL HAS BEEN DENIED ENTRY WITH NO EXPLANATION OF POLICY OTHER THAN "WE ARE ACTING IN ACCORD WITH ARAB LEAGUE DECISION." WE HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE, THEREFORE, BUT TO DISCOVER SYRIAN PRACTICE THROUGH EXPERIENCE.  
MURPHY

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